

A
0
0
0
6
0
7
4
8
3
5



UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



UICSR LIBRARY

X-66354



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

The STORY OF LIZZIE McGUIRE





LIZZIE MCGUIRE.

The STORY
OF
LIZZIE MCGUIRE
BY HERSELF



HENRY A. DICKERMAN & SON
PUBLISHERS
BOSTON AND NEW YORK

COPYRIGHT 1902
BY
HENRY A. DICKERMAN & SON

To
MY GREAT SNAKES

JULY ONE

CHELSEA, MASS.

July 1, 1902.

I have decided to put down in my diary a full account of myself and my feelings, for I am queer.

I am queer, very queer. Some folks think I am nutty.

I am a sweet, dear maiden of thirty-five summers, and I have lived in Chelsea all my life. Surely, that is enough. I need not add, after telling that, that my parallel cannot be found on earth to-day.

Think of it. Thirty-five years — and in Chelsea.

Pity me, Great Snakes, pity me.

My young heart is bursting its suspender buttons, and all because I have been confined to the barren wastes of my native burg.

No kind young man has ever suggested that he become my Great Snake.

No kind young man has ever suggested that he

10 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

bear me off on horseback to a four-roomed flat and an oil stove.

I am convinced of this, and it has made me queer,—almost bughouse.

I have a marvellous capacity for beefsteak and onions.

I am broad-gauged ; and, if you do not believe me, have a look at my photograph on the fly page.

Unlike my predecessors, I am not a philosopher of any very pathetic school.

I am a philosopher of my own make, because, like others, I need the money.

Money is dirty stuff to handle ; but I am willing to take a chance, as do the rest of you.

I care for neither good nor bad (money); if I can pass it on the electric cars.

I have what I call a NIT conscience.

I am not exactly daffy over the subject of myself, but still I do not mind saying that I am one of the best ever.

I have a bunch of friends in Chelsea, and I have looked them over pretty thoroughly. But in vain.

The Story of Lizzie McGuire 11

I cannot find any one whom I can call my parallel. There are those of varying depths and widths, but they are not in my class. I trot in the two hundred and ninety pound class, and none of the villagers over our way can tip the scales at my figure. I have a depth and width all my own. The gang all pass me their gosh darned smiles because I am such a heavy husky maiden.

There are about forty or fifty of these confounded idiots.

I have dipped into literature in my endeavor to find my parallel, and the nearest I can come to it is in Katie Rooney who wrote "A Lovely Pair of Arms; or, How would you like to be the Ice-man?"

Katie and I have lots of moods and feelings in common.

I often feel like Katie did when she penned those immortal lines, "Love is like a Dago. It comes up and hits you when you are not looking."

I see from those words that Kate had groped in darkness. Her fresh young soul pined for a

12 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

realization of her dreams. Her heart had been pierced by all the heavy emotions of this cruel, black world.

Or she had dyspepsia. I am not sure which.

But I am a genius, and don't you forget it.

I do not dare to get too far from the subject of myself for any length of time for fear that you may mislay the fact that I am the whole thing.

I was born in Chelsea, Mass., in 1867; and, if the town does not live to shake hands with itself when I move, then Great Snakes deliver it.

All of my family were Irish.

So am I.

The only days in my life when the barrenness of Chelsea has seemed to brighten up and get a move on it has been the thirty St. Patrick Days that I can vividly recall.

My brother is a bar-tender, and my sister makes sandwiches for a lunch-counter in Boston.

There is no bond of any sort between me, Lizzie McGuire, and my brother and sister.

The only tie I can think of is a note of my brother's that I hold for sixty-three dollars.

The Story of Lizzie McGuire 13

Oh, how my little, thirty-five year old maiden heart yearns for recognition!

Oh, if my sister — she of my own flesh and blood — would come to me and understand me! If she would come and throw her arms around me, and let our sisterly love grow warm!

But she does not do it.

And, oh, if my brother would come to me and understand me! If he would come and say, "Here, Liz. Here is that sixty-three"!

But he does not do it.

Is it because I am the genius of the family? Or is it because I am easy?

I am beginning to think it is because Brother Bill is a genius.

JULY TWO

July 2.

Among other things I have, in my own bright, little way, learned how to feed myself and enjoy myself during the process.

I am a rattling good feeder, with a capital "F."

It takes a genius to know how to eat; and my healthy, fat thirty-five years knows it all in the eating line, and don't you forget that.

I am now an *AI* feeder, and can finish any old thing in the food line in short order.

My philosophy of eating is extremely easy and simple, and you need not be in the gray-haired forties or fifties to become one of my disciples.

The art of feeding revolves around two points: feed whenever you get the chance, and take as large bites as your mouth can hold, comfortably or otherwise.

In this way you can eat beef quickly, and get ahead of the rise in prices.

18 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

Down with the Beef Trust, I say ; and the only way to down it is to eat fast and much.

There are those who eat and drink for the sake of eating and drinking. They are soubrettes.

But I have learned one particular art of which I am proud. It has strengthened my opinion that I am a genius.

I have learned how to eat a sausage.

I place two five-inch gray sausages on my plate before me. (In selecting sausages, always see that they are fitted with gray tights.)

I contemplate them.

They make me think at once of the Dog Show,—where the dog biscuit and the brass collar are the emblems ; of the bench show where lines of stalls flank the long hallways ; of yelps such as only the hungry fox terrier can emit ; of the pound where are held the mongrels of the city—and of the doubtful butchers.

The mere sight of a sausage does tricks with my mind.

I poke the south-eastern corner of the sausage

nearest me with my fork, and with my knife I jab it as nearly in the centre as possible. Then with my right hand, or paw, as my genius dictates that I say, I raise it to my lips and carefully insert it between my two rows of white store teeth (bought for \$4.98 per set, with teeth extracted without pain, free of charge).

Gee! How happy I am when I chew that tender old sausage.

I think of the adorable lines of an old German poet: "Oh, vere, oh, vere, is my leedle dog gone? Oh, vere, oh, vere, can he be?"

"Ah! dear, old, indigestible *Seinerwurst*," I say, "what t'ell do I care if you do give me a pain across the middle? I am game, I am."

The half of sausage then slips down my little red lane and into my stomach, where it is greeted by the glad hand. My stomach is dead game, too, and would not let on to a sausage that it could not digest it. My stomach is the stomach of a genius, and there are only a few like us. Let me tell you. The philosophy of my stomach may be summed up

20 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

in the words of itself, which are : " If Lizzie likes it, then I'll try my best."

You can see that my stomach is subservient to my palate, as all geniuses' stomachs should be.

My fork grabs another half of the beautiful, round gray sausage.

Oh ! Such ecstasy !

And thus I push the remaining three pieces of sausage into my face ; and, as the last half slides through my gullet, my character changes.

Have I eaten too fast or too much ?

Neither, surely.

But, somehow or other, I have what common folks call a pain.

And a confounded painful pain, too.

My festive stomach lifts up a silent cuss word or two, directed toward Simms, the butcher.

There seems to be nothing doing in the digesting line in little Lizzie's stomach.

I put my feet on the mantel-piece. The entire world is now one great big sausage, and I feel that I am slowly slipping off it. My mind is capable

The Story of Lizzie McGuire 21

of conceiving but one idea,—that confounded sausage.

I know now, Great Snakes, where to find that damnation you have told me so much about.

All I have to do is to look at a sausage, and I get the cramps.

You can bet all that is coming to you that the fellow who said that life is a tragedy had eaten sausages before he said it.

As the years pass, I shall put away sausages under my belt ; and after each good eat I shall, no doubt, have a good old-fashioned pain like mother used to have.

For this is the art of feeding.

And meanwhile give me the adorable gray sausage that the Beef Trust cannot touch.

Hurrah for sausages !

JULY THREE

July 3.

Sometimes, when I wander out around this tired old village of Chelsea, I fall into a half-dazed, half-comatose condition, and my wonderful mind takes excursion trips to distant lands.

To-day it went to Revere Beach, at reduced rates.

There I saw the long, curved beach, with its pebbles, its sand, its tin cans, and its castaway lunch boxes. The adorable scent of roasting peanuts and popping corn was wafted against my delicate nostrils. The groaning, straining melody of a merry-go-round organ played ecstatically upon my sensitive ear-drums. There I heard the grinding rattle of the steeplechase horses, reminding me, and tearing my stout, thirty-five-year-old heart with the thought of the daring young man who has never suggested to me that I fly away with him on horseback.

26 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

Oh, such a beautiful ocean, too!

How many Venuses have come out onto that beach! How many graceful fairies, with peroxide hair and pencilled goo-goos, have never dared to touch those beautiful, briny, busily babbling wavelets as they dash up in breakers six inches high! How many of these damsels of the chorus have feared to lave in that great, grand, glorious ocean, lest their bathing costumes might fade and their cheeks lose their rosy hue!

I stood on the beach, and took a look at that old ocean, dreaming sweet dreams.

But my dreams were shattered by an urchin who ran wildly from the waters, yelling, "Hully Gee! Dat's cold, dat water is."

I walked on a little way.

Then I stood still.

"This is the gateway to that fool-killer, the Loop," I muttered to myself. "I am a fool. Yes, frankness is one of the marks of my genius. I am a fool. So I will hie me in, spend my nickel, and loop the Loop."

The Story of Lizzie McGuire 27

I went up and bought a ticket, and entered the enclosure by a gate that was two sizes too small for one of my broad gauge.

Finally, I did, by hard pushing, manage to pop through the aperture; and, as I landed within, a smile, a heavenly, beauteous smile floated across my fair, cherry lips.

Oh, how I smiled!

In fact, I almost forgot my genius, and laughed outright.

And with good cause, too, because I had passed a bum quarter on the door-keeper.

Well, I and my sensitive nature decided to board a car, and take the flying trip.

To think that I, Lizzie McGuire, the genius from the sleepy town of Chelsea, should loop the Loop.

But I did.

The first thing I remember was a sensation similar to the one felt by passengers when an elevated train stops. It threw me back about two feet, all in a bunch, and I could hear the seat crack.

Then I started on my journey heavenward.

28 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

And then, oh, then !

I stood balanced between sky and earth and on the brink of the most entrancingly steep incline that you can imagine.

How my fat heart fluttered !

“ Let her go ! ” I whimpered with my angel voice.

And the attendant gave me a shove and a start on my downward trip.

My heart turned a double somersault and landed on the back of my neck. My breath came and went in the proverbial short pants.

Down, down, down !

Gee ! How I flew !

Such sensations !

Oh ! Ah !

Ugh !

Wow !

Suddenly it seemed as though the track came up and slapped me in the face. A thousand little devils seemed to be pouring ice-water down my collar and along my backbone.

My knees flew up.

My head flew down.

They met.

Such a headache!

As I whirled over, with feet up and head down, I felt like a heavy-weight acrobat doing his turn over six elephants.

Where, oh, where, would I land?

I began to choose my pall-bearers.

When I reached the downward whirl of the confounded Loop, it seemed that my body was trying to get a lap or two ahead of my head.

It seemed as though four horses were trying to separate me from the lid of my brain.

The first thing I knew I was flying up another incline and around in circles. But by the time I reached the transfer station I was Lizzie McGuire again.

A little the worse for wear, perhaps, but still Liz, I left the Loop and walked out toward the beach.

Just as I left the gate, a handsome young man smiled at me, and then he followed me.

30 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

I turned and looked.

He smiled.

So did I.

He came close to me, and said, "Tell me, pretty maiden" —

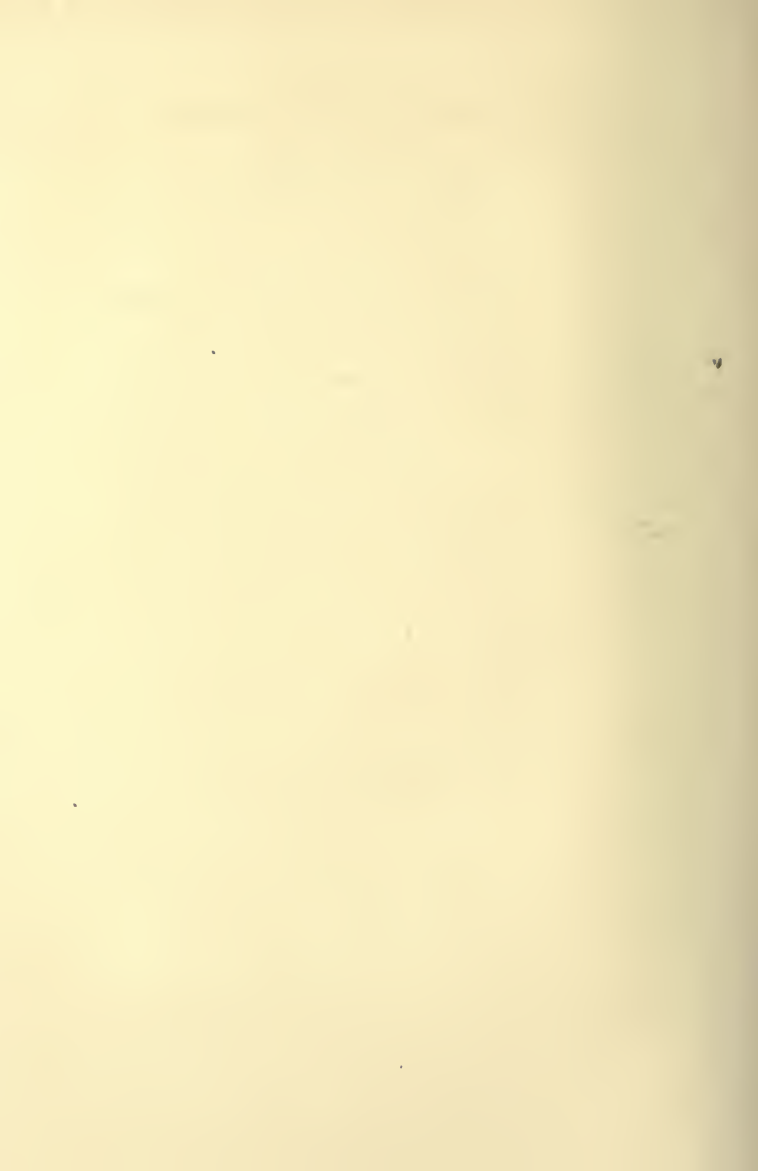
Then I woke up and found myself wandering around alone on the streets of Chelsea.

That's my luck every time.

If I could have slept a few minutes longer!

Just to have met the nice young man.

JULY FOUR



July 4.

Bang!!!

I awoke with a start this morning.

It was a flying start.

Young Patrick jumped into the glorious Fourth by setting off a cannon cracker in the front hall.

It shook my windows and it jolted me ; and, forgetting my sedate manners and my two hundred and ninety pounds of womankind, I leaped from my downy couch with fear, and landed on a tray full of dishes that had been left from my supper last night.

Farewell, dishes and tray !

Smithereens !

I often rise early in the morning, and gaze out of my window at the barrenness of Chelsea.

But I do not always get out of bed on the bounce as I did this morning.

However, this morning, with the excitement

34 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

caused by a cannon cracker and a tray full of broken crockery, I was unable to sleep more, so I put on my kimono and sat by the window to dream.

To-day is the day that the Americans freed this country for the use of the Irish, so you may see why my dreams took on a red, white, and blue hue.

I dreamed that the clock struck nine and there came a rap at my door.

I opened it, and there stood a young man.

My Great Snakes!

I bade him enter, and said,—

“Whatst wouldst thoust, Great Snakes?”

“It is you, Lizzie McGuire, that I am after,” he said in a soft, melodious voice; “and I want you to put on your glad duds, and come with me. We will canoe on the river.”

Oh, how my two-ninety did tremble.

“You cannot lose little Lizzie,” quoth I.

And off we trolled to Riverside.

He had a lovely canoe.

But it lacked beam enough for me.

I am a very wide article; and, try as I would, I could not squeeze into that confounded canoe.

Finally, he found a larger one, and managed to tuck me in.

Then off we went.

There was a good crowd on the river, but we managed to reach midstream.

All at once we tipped.

"Trim boat, trim boat," he shouted.

I moved my foot two inches, and we regained our equilibrium.

We paddled along slowly, as my Great Snakes found me heavy freight.

I smiled.

I chatted.

I giggled.

I did everything that foolish, popular young girls do; but his face never brightened.

He began to perspire.

He began to heave.

"This paddle seems to weigh a ton," he said at length.

"Or, perhaps, it is you," he added, wiping the perspiration from his brow.

36 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

Men are so cranky.

Even my Great Snakes was a crank.

He worried me.

He made me perspire, too ; and, as I reached to my belt for my kerchief, I must have moved some part of my bulky anatomy.

It was all done in a second.

Kerplunk !

The canoe went over in a jiffy.

And I went with it.

So did my Great Snakes.

“O Lord ! O Lord ! oh, help ! oh, murder !” I murmured, keeping my head cool. “I’ll sink ! I’ll drown !”

But I didn’t.

The canoe sank ; but little Liz floated like a cork, with her two hundred and ninety pounds’ displacement.

The police boat was near, and they threw a life preserver to my young man.

They threw a strong rope to me, and preferred to take a chance at towing me rather than lift me to the deck.

The Story of Lizzie McGuire 37

They could not pull me very close to shore before I scraped, as I draw about six feet of water when I am afloat.

Then I got up, walked ashore and shook myself like a little Fido, until my Great Snakes, damp but game, came up to where I stood.

We found that we were in Norumbega Park ; and he was ashamed to take me home, as we both looked like ducked rats.

So we sat in the sun, and dried.

When the moisture had evaporated, we started for a walk.

It was then I learned the make of my escort's trousers.

They were the kind that you can see in front of Salem Street stores.

"All this for three dollars."

They had shrunk, and were half-way up to his knees.

But still I was proud of my Adonis.

I have such a sensitive, impressionistic nature that even my ducking could not take the starch out of my ardor.

38 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

In my opinion, he was a bird.

We walked around to look at the animals.

We were not the only animals in the park.

As we stood before the monkey cage, my character changed.

I felt sure I saw young Pat Gilhooly hanging to the cage and shaking the wire screen.

He shook with a good old Irish temper, and all at once it gave way, and with a crash the whole cage, wire and all, came over on me.

Oh!

Then I woke up to find myself in Chelsea,—barren, sleepy, dead Chelsea,—and sputtering around me was a pack of popping fire-crackers that Pat had tossed into my bedroom.

I could hear his retreating footsteps in the hall.

The son-of-a-gun.

JULY FIVE

July 5.

I have in me the germs of a corking good prize-fighter.

If I were a man and could earn my living by fighting, you can gamble that the world would have to recognize me as an intense heavy-weight.

I have the personality, the nature of a Sullivan, a Corbett, a Jeffries, and a Sharkey.

But I am a poor, thirty-five-year-old female. I cannot fight, even though a good scrap means easy money,—sixty per cent. to the winner and twenty per cent. to the loser of the gate receipts.

I have that tenacious, never-get-licked, scrappy disposition that makes prize-fighters of men.

Now I would like to be such a man as is Jimmie Flaherty, the "Coffee Cooler," of Salem, Mass.

I have met the gentleman once, while he was visiting the family of his sparring partner here in the sleepy barrenness of Chelsea.

42 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

I have twelve printed, pink-tinted pictures of Jimmie that I keep in the top tray of my old, canvas-backed trunk.

They were taken from the *Police Gazette*.

Often, late in the evening, while I am brewing a cup of tea in a kettle over the gas-jet in my room, I take these pictures from my trunk, and place them in graceful array along the edge of my washstand.

Then I gaze at them until my stout, thirty-five-year-old heart flutters like an aspen leaf before an electric fan.

I am certainly dead stuck on Jimmie Flaherty. He is a regular Napoleon to me.

And he came very near to winning the Richard K. Fox belt. He did, so he did.

As I look at his photographs, I fall in love with him more and more.

The twelve pictures of him that I have are all alike, but so different.

In the first he is a strapping big fellow, posed as if for a cigarette picture. I fall in love with him.

In the second he stands with his left drawn high and his right drawn ready for an upper cut. I fall in love with him.

In the third he looks as though he could lick anything from Chelsea to Roxbury. I fall in love with him.

In the fourth his eyes are bright, as though he had them on the check he will receive from the management after the bout is over, whether he wins or loses. I fall in love with him — and the check.

In the fifth he looks like a lobster. I fall in love with him.

In the sixth he is greasy, and looks as though he needed the money. I fall in love with him just the same.

In the seventh he seems groggy, and I am sure a soft tap on the solar plexus would put him down and out. I fall in love with him.

In the eighth he looks sleepy, and the night before he no doubt spent in Chelsea. Still I fall in love with him.

44 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

In the ninth he reminds me of a butcher in a South Omaha packing-house. I fall in love with him.

In the tenth he seems as fresh as a conductor on the Winchester and Woburn electric cars. I fall in love with him.

In the eleventh he looks as though his wife had gone through his pockets the night before. I fall in love with him (and I hope his wife will not see this).

In the twelfth he is throwing out his chest and holding up his head as though he was afraid of spilling his load. He looks as though Baltimore could not turn out enough good old rye to fill his tank, and his chin is thrown out with the confidence of a man who never takes a chaser after downing a fifteen-cent drink. He seems about to say, "Any old sour mash. That's all." Oh, how vividly in love with him I fall!

I love a man who can hold his refreshments like a gentleman.

As I sit here with my feet on the gas-jet and

gaze at the twelve *Police Gazette* pictures of Jimmie, I think that he is a lallapaloosa.

He reminds me of my Great Snakes.

He reminds me of the young man I have pictured who will come and take me home with him some day.

As I look out of the window and gaze at a tenement house and a cop who is asleep on his beat, I wonder,—yes, I cogitate.

Will my Jimmie Flaherty ever come?

Some day, my Great Snakes, some day.

Damn it!

JULY SIX

July 6.

I have said that I am alone in this world.

I have made an error, as I am not quite alone.

I have one hanger-on that I cannot lose, and she manages to keep herself around my vicinity most of the time.

She is the lady who does my washing, and I call her my "laundry lady."

I sometimes call her my ammonia lady, as she uses some sort of a chemical in the water when she does my clothes up. It coaxes holes in white goods, I know that.

Anyway, she is as different from me as day is from night. She believes in hanging around a person who owes her two dollars for washing, and she believes in jollyng the reticent ones until they come up with the mazuma.

My beliefs are along the lines of an entirely different creed. If a person owes me money, and I

50 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

cannot get it for the asking,— well, give me an axe.
I'll take it from them by violent separation.

Even if I have to use a gun.

But my laundry lady is all to the good.

She taught me all I know about how to do up
starched clothes.

But she cannot extract money from me unless
she gives me gas.

I am odd and a genius, and I never pay bills.

I am a thief, too.

My father was a second-story man, so I guess.
I come by my propensity for pinching things in a
perfectly natural way.

I am not wealthy enough to be called a klepto-
maniac. Still there is some spirit hanging about
me that makes me love to annex things, as Dan
Daly would say.

I shall never forget how I swiped three dollars
from the lobster that lives in the flat just below us.

You see the old man I refer to is a veteran of
the Spanish War, and he draws a pension.

One of his legs is shorter than the other because
it was broken in the war, and had a bum set.

He broke it while running away from a skirmish.

Somehow he managed to get the pension, but the pension officers did not know which way he was running when he received the fracture.

The old war-horse loves his liquor, but hates to go out and get it.

He has the Chelsea spirit, and it pains him to move around much.

One day he called me down to his flat, and I went.

“What can I do for you, my dear Alphonse?” I said with my usual happy smile and sunny look.

“Liz,” he said in his kind old way, casting a squinting look at my thirty-five years and two hundred and ninety pounds of womankind, “Liz, I want you to get me a gallon of good old Bourbon. As I know your fair young palate is that of a genius and a connoisseur, I intrust these four bones of the republic to your chubby hand; and, if you will hie yourself into the city of Boston and exchange them for four quarts of the ‘best made,’ you will do your dear Alphonse a great favor.”

52 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

Thereupon he thrust into my lunch-grappler four crisp one-dollar green boys.

I put on my gray crêpe de chine, and took the next car for the big burg.

My wonderful mind was in deep cogitation meanwhile.

Here was my chance to rake off a seventy-five per cent. commission.

I am a thief — and a wonder at figures.

When I reached town, I went straightway to my brother, the bar-keep.

I asked him the price of corn juice.

“De prices vary, Liz,” he said. “Anywhere frum one samoleon ter six fer a gallon.”

“How about the dollar stuff?” quoth I.

“Well,” said he, “them’s fair goods, them’s fair goods. Them’s der kind we serves ter cabbies and waiters at 10 cents per throw. But what do youse want wid hilarious liquids? Youse are not hitting it up, are youse, Liz?”

Oh, how the language of brother Bill does rile me!

The Story of Lizzie McGuire 53

And how I do think of that sixty-three whenever I see him.

If I could only get my hands on that chunk of dough that I so foolishly let slip from my pocket-book!

What would my laundry lady say if I did get it?

She would quote Kip, and spout, "Pay! Pay! Pay!" I suppose.

Anyway, I got him to pour me out a gallon of one-dollar fire-water, and then he pasted an Old Crow label on the demijohn at my suggestion.

I took the stuff to the old vet, and he smacked his lips as he let it slide down his red gullet. He said he always did like Old Crow.

"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

But I am wise to the fact that little Lizzie has three one-dollar bills tucked away in her purse; and, when the vet and I drank to the health of the pension office, I sighed,

"After you, my dear Alphonse."

JULY SEVEN

July 7.

I have never told you about the joint where I hang out.

In this flat where I drag out this accursed, gosh-hanged, gol-darned existence of mine, there lives a family whose uncouth ways and primeval manners grate upon my sensitive, genius nerves.

I have two rooms, with stove heat, oil light, and the free use of the family bath-room in this flat, for which I hand out six, juicy dollars per week.

Oh, how I do weary of the Nothingness!

If a young man who would be my Great Snake should knock at my parlor door right now and offer to take me unto his heart, I would say, "In a minute," so quickly that he would develop heart disease.

But I was talking of my rooms and our flat, and I must not let my mind wander to love, sweet love.

58 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

As I said, I have free use of our bath-room; and I hate to enter the dreariness of the place.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilhooly, from whom I rent my rooms, and the three little Gilhoolys persist in using the bath-room as a depository for their footwear.

I can stand tooth-brushes, but deliver me from shoes.

Shoes! Shoes! Shoes!

Oh, the dreariness and the wofulness of the Nothingness in this barrenness and sleepiness of a Chelsea bath-room!

I have been told that one of the horrors of the Inquisition, in which the pinnacle of cruelty was reached and perched, was the forcing of victims to read newspapers that were filled with cheap patent medicine advertisements.

Well, this punishment was not one, two, three as horrible as it is, compared to the tortuous spasms that run up my vertebra whenever I see those shoes in our bath-room.

My very pathetic philosophy cannot stand for a

line of broken-out, run-down shoes that extends half-way around a dingy bath-room.

There are, in the bunch, three ancient Congress boots that belong to the old man Gilhooly. The side elastics are has-beens and merely suggestions of their former worthiness.

The sides of each shoe are, I should judge, eight inches apart; and the entrance apertures are big enough to admit a ton of coal without being touched.

Old Gilhooly could put them on the floor, take a run, and jump into them without touching anything but the soles.

They are what one would call seven-masters, and they do jolt my artistic nature muchly.

I said above that there were three boots.

These are the remnants of two pairs.

Mrs. Gilhooly used the other shoe for a flower-pot; and it now hangs, beautifully gilded, before the dining-room window, containing a blooming sweet potato, with a weeping willow effect.

I do not blame it for weeping. It brings tears to my own crafty eyes.

60 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

Next in the line come a pair of high button boots, with but few buttons left, a pair of \$1.98 Oxfords, and two pairs of cracked, patched, dilapidated, passé, once-upon-a-time, out-in-front, out-in-back, out-on-the-sides, high-heeled slippers.

This display belongs to the exhibit of Mrs. Gilhooly; and, as I gaze at them backed up against the bath-room wall, it sets my odd, philosophic mind to work, and I think great thoughts.

Such thoughts as will bring me fame.

Such thoughts as will make my name and my writings the watchwords of future generations.

I think, "Such a sloppy weather!"

Following Mommer Gilhooly's footwear come two pairs of muddy, laceless hoof coverings of a smaller size. These belong to young Patrick Gilhooly, and the sight of them makes my thirty-five years of womankind tremble with contempt.

I have the natural aversion to a small boy that is part of the make-up of every maiden of thirty-five, and in Patrick we have the essence of the mischievous, red-headed Irish kid.

The Story of Lizzie McGuire 61

His hair is as bright a crimson as the sunsets in cheap tea chromos.

His face is hidden behind a screen of freckles.

To see him once is to remember him always; and, as I see those shoes, I can imagine Pat in them.

So vivid is my imagination that yesterday I pictured him so completely in his boots that I involuntarily grabbed a poker that was lying on the coal in the bath-tub.

The remainder of the shoe line is made up of odd, ramshackle pedal cases that have seen better days — many years ago.

Oh, how the gray matter of my mind is pounded and mauled by the sight of that shoe line!

Why am I so fussy?

It is because I am so odd.

And I am odd because it pays.

I need the money, and I am frank enough to say so.

But those shoes!

Gee!

JULY EIGHT

July 8.

The hamlet of Chelsea presents a nifty field to a student of humanity and human nature. Such a mixed bunch of gazabes are presented by no other town in the United States, I will gamble on that.

Think over all the places you know, such as Butte, Omaha, Saugus, and other big cities, and you cannot find such a motley group of burghers as Chelsea turns out.

We have a spicy conglomeration of Irish, Germans, Africans, Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, and Card Readers.

We have all sorts and conditions of men ; and, as I am an old residenter, I am on to them all.

How weary I am of the Vacuity of it all. (That is another good word I have registered to my credit.)

Now I have the corner room of the corner flat in a corner tenement house, and there is not much

66 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

doing on the streets that butt up to the building that I am not on to.

I will describe some of my neighbors.

There is an Irishman who lives with his family of eight healthy sons, and the old Shamrock is a roustabout for fair.

He drives a brewery wagon, and I guess he must get paid on Friday nights.

I can vouch for the fact that he never gets to work on Saturdays.

As he rolls into the street Friday evenings, it would appear that he had made his last delivery of bottled goods down his own red gullet.

He walks like a sea serpent and sings like a steam Calliope.

One can hear "Comb back to Erin" for four blocks on every Friday night if he will come out our way about nine o'clock.

Then there is a German who lives on the next street. He walks around the block for exercise six times each clear evening.

I should say he measured about six front feet by seven feet deep.

He looks like a young balloon.

All the small boys yell, as he passes, "Cut the guy ropes, Bill, and don't drop the parachute until you are at least four hundred high."

But he does not mind. Dutchy is immovable; and I guess he would smoke that pipe that looks like a golf club, even if the city was on fire.

I do not know any Africans, but a blind man in Chelsea can hardly help from seeing our colored population.

And the hundreds that I pass every day make my wonderful brain feel like a nutmeg on a grater.

But where Chelsea shines is in her collection of freaks.

She has more Spiritualists, Christian Scientists, and Fortune Tellers to the square inch than any other berg on earth.

There is a woman in the flat above us who claims to be a spiritualistic medium.

Of course, she is a bluff like the rest of her gang; but she is dead wise, all right, all right.

She knows how to squeeze dimes out of easy

68 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

marks by jollying them into the belief that she can talk with the ones who have cashed in their chips, and she is making easy money.

She got me into one of her soirées one night, and told me she could put me in communication with any old has-been that I could think of ; and I told her I would like to talk with the late Katie Hooligan.

She looked Kate up in the directory, and found that her number was 4,711 Hades ; but, somehow, she could not ring her up. I guess the wires were crossed.

There was nothing doing in the Kate line for me ; and Kate owed me \$2.80 when she left, too.

That is why I wanted to talk to her.

Then I know a woman who is a Christian Scientist.

She tells me she is a disciple of a certain Mane Waddy, the great mogul of the twentieth century, new-fangled fanaticism.

She says that this Waddy woman has written several books that tell why everything is nothing.

The Story of Lizzie McGuire 69

I guess Mrs. Waddy does her writing in Chelsea.

The C. S. woman that I know says that Mrs. Waddy is just completing a new book entitled "Follow me, and you will wear Diamonds, or, How I catch a Lobster."

The C. S. woman came to me last week and told me that nothing is. We only think we are. Pain is a cinch. We only think it is.

Such a foolishness !

And two days later she called on me, and asked me if I knew any good painless dentist in Boston.

Wouldn't that jar you ?

As for our Card Readers, I know several by sight ; but, as I think they are even worse fools than I, I cut them out.

We have all sorts of guys in this town, let me tell you.

Do you wonder that the barrenness of it all is wearing my two hundred and ninety pounds to a shadow ?

(See frontispiece.)

JULY NINE

July 9.

There are several things in this world that make me dead sore.

Here I am, of womankind and thirty-five years, looking for a young man who will make me his own little spare-rib of two hundred and ninety pounds ; but still I have some things in mind for which I entertain a decided antipathy. (Good word, that last, isn't it ?)

There are things that we see and bump against every day, and many of them jolt me terribly.

Often that wonderful mind of mine chants a litany of its own, and it goes something like this.

From Chelsea, from Roxbury, from Camden, N.J., from Council Bluffs, from Butte ; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From little Fidos with twisted mainsprings, from bar-tenders who persist in putting cherries in dry

74 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

Martinis, from girls who order chicken à la Maryland in winter ; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From women who wear blue dresses, green veils, and high-heeled slippers on the streets, from car conductors who wear diamond rings, from living pictures, women's orchestras, and the biograph ; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From hotels that expect guests to pay their waiters, from postal cards, from letters written in lead pencil ; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From house-breakers that work while you sleep ; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From the man who employs a stenographer with hair of a different color than his wife's, from water cart drivers ; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From the books of William Shakespeare and Nick Carter, from the woman who takes her dog on shopping trips, from cucumbers and milk ; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From baked beans, brown bread, and Boston blue blood, from swell palaces built in dumps, from transplanted castles ; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From young men who rubber on rainy days, from street organs that play "The Maiden's Prayer"; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From henpecked husbands, from the Elevated Road, from 10, 20, and 30 cent. melodramas; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From faked prize fights, from swelled-head State senators, from gossiping women who get you in trouble "for your own good"; Great Snakes, deliver me.

From men and women who smell of sen-sen, from club women who know it all; Great Snakes, deliver me.

And so on and on and on, on, on.

But I would stand for all these things willingly if I could have the one great wish of the present moment gratified.

I wish I had a glass of beer, some potato salad, and a hot Frankfurter.

Give me these, and I will sit at continuous shows all day, and enjoy myself.

I was just now reciting this litany of mine when

76 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

Pat Gilhooly, the pride of the household, came bouncing into my boudoir, and told me that his mother had just received a case of wet goods from Boston.

I could have embraced the child in my Happiness.

Patrick is too old to have any of his first teeth and too young to have any of his second teeth.

He smiled at me lovingly; and, as he parted his face, it seemed as though his features were trying to leave each other.

The upper and lower halves of his facial expression appeared to be trying hard to get a divorce from each other.

My heart would have gone out to the boy, were it not for the fact that I feared he would swallow it.

However, I went in, and quaffed the flowing bowl with Mrs. G.

It was fine.

I forgot all about the confounded litany.

JULY TEN

July 10.

I find that I am nothing more nor less than a great big bluff.

"After the large show we give a grand stage concert in the main tent. Agents will now pass among you with tickets. Reserved seats, ten cents."

This is what we hear at the circus, and I feel that I am much on the order of the concert performers who bunco the reserved seat occupants.

As I look back over my diary and read what I have written, I can plainly see that I am a bluff, a fool, and a liar.

But there are others, and there is consolation in that.

I said I was a liar, but in reality I am only a fibber.

I have written a lot of fibs in my diary, and, like myself, it is all a bluff; but, if people go

80 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

wild over young girls who seek notoriety by writing slush about themselves, why should I not make a stab at selling a few diaries?

I am looking for Happiness, and meanwhile I am looking for my share of the filthy lucre.

A thin, fine vapor of bluff hangs over me as I write; and it bids me choke off, as the people of to-day know when they have had enough.

I could be breezy, I suppose, and cover three hundred and twenty pages with "bluff and stuff," and then my diary would sell at bookstores for \$1.10 net.

But what's the use?

I am too charitable to do that.

I have lived my thirty-five years buried in an environment that has differed greatly from the one I would have chosen, had I been able.

It has been my desire from childhood to be a ballet dancer.

Ballet dancers are bluffs, you know.

But I would not have to bluff.

The fact of the matter is that I am a little too

big to be a coryphée. So, you see, I could not bluff with force.

I have enough "form" for three ballet dancers.

However, I never disclose my real self to the gaping crowds.

I decided long ago to devote my time to literature, because I know that my style and diction are without rivals in this country to-day.

What care I for the remarks of the people?

Have I not been told that my wonderful genius for writing is absolutely perfect?

Two of the greatest writers the world has ever seen have said so.

It happened that one of my essays entitled "Cause and Effect; or, Pie and Indigestion," was read at a spiritualistic conference when the spirits of Cicero, Catullus, and Virgil were present.

After it was finished, these three great German poets cried, "Bravo! Bravo! Lizzie is a genius! Such writings and word pictures!"

Then why should I do anything but write?

I am frank, very frank, and I say what I think.

82 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

I can truthfully say that I have never taken a bribe. Never have I taken a cent with the agreement that I would coincide with the views of others.

But I am trusting that my luck may change.

Offer me a dollar to say that black is white, and see how quickly I develop color-blindness.

Taking my cue from authors who have gone before, I will put down any words or collection of thoughts that my publishers think will sell.

You can bet your life on that !

What Lizzie Maguire is looking for is Fame — with a capital “F.”

Who can tell but that I may yet travel from city to city, and be wined, dined, and looked at as a freak, and I will carry my bluff along with me.

Oh, to be an author and a press agent, all rolled into one !

It would not only mean Fame, but Dough ; and I am frank enough to say that that is what little Lizzie is out for.

My predecessors have left that confession out of their diaries.

The Story of Lizzie McGuire 83

But it is a ten to one shot that they have all had their pocket-books receivingly open, as they craftily laughed up their sleeves.

In laying bare myself and my genius, I hope I have not produced a wrong impression on your mind.

I have said that I am thirty-five.

But I have also said that I am a liar, so I may be forty-five.

I have explained that I consisted of two hundred and ninety pounds of womankind.

You can verify that by looking at the picture on the front page of this book.

I have said I am a thief.

But I am a liar, so I may be a Sunday-school teacher for all you know.

If I were all the things I have said I am, would you, kind reader, put much faith in me and my words and my book?

Not on your tintype!

It takes narrow-minded persons to think that the great American public is sufficiently narrow-minded

84 The Story of Lizzie McGuire

to take them seriously when they make a bluff that they are stars and self-discovered geniuses, just because they sling a pint or two of ink on a few white pages.

Great Snakes, deliver me ! ! ! !

UCSB LIBRARY

X-660356

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 000 607 483 5

